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A LEGISLATIVE PRELUDE TO FLEXIBLE RESPONSE

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A LEGISLATIVE PRELUDE TO FLEXIBLE RESPONSE

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## INTRODUCTION

On January 30, 1961, President John F. Kennedy, in his State of the Union Message, indicated that the United States was embarking upon a military program which in many ways would differ significantly from that of the preceding administration. In keeping with election campaign promises to correct America's "prestige, missile, and limited warfare capability gap," the President indicated that he had directed prompt action to:

(a) accelerate the entire ballistic missile program;  
(b) step up the polaris submarine program; and (c) increase troop and support air lift capability so as to "assure the ability of our conventional forces to respond with discrimination and speed, to any problem at any spot on the globe at any moment's notice."<sup>1</sup>

While acceleration of existing programs did not necessarily indicate that a major revision of the country's military strategy was being effected, nevertheless the implied urgency of the acceleration and the

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<sup>1</sup>J. F. Kennedy, "State of the Union Address January 30, 1961," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XLIV, No. 1129 (February 13, 1961), p. 211.



emphasis on conventional airlift were a significant break with the past, and could certainly be construed as presaging larger and more all-encompassing changes. By Spring of 1961, it had become obvious that the Kennedy administration was committed to something far more long-reaching than just acceleration of existing programs. "Quick Fixes" were being implemented to correct deficiencies in America's strategic military posture, and these "fixes" and propounded future objectives in this area began to assume a cohesiveness and pattern which indicated that a specific and identifiable strategic program had been "chosen" by the administration and was being systematically implemented.

Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara explained that the ultimate objective was to develop military forces that would provide a range of options, conventional and nuclear, which would put the United States in the position of "being able to choose, coolly and deliberately, the level and kind of response we feel appropriate in our own best interest, and both our enemies and our friends will know it."<sup>2</sup> More specifically,

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<sup>2</sup>D. W. Tarr, American Strategy in the Nuclear Age, p. 109.



he pointed out that "we must continue to provide for the forces required to deter an all-out nuclear war. Only behind the shield of such forces can the free world hope to cope successfully with lesser military aggressions. But, having provided these essential forces, we want to see that this nation . . . has the kinds of forces needed to discourage more limited military adventures by the enemies of freedom . . . . Our limited war forces should be properly deployed, properly trained, and properly equipped to deal with the entire spectrum of such actions; and they should have the means to move quickly to wherever they may be needed on very short notice."<sup>3</sup>

The Kennedy Administration had, therefore, selected a strategy of "flexible response" or "multiple options." The new approach would place a number of strategic retaliatory or limited war options in the hands of the President so that responses to any kind of attack could be rational and deliberate without the hazard of either over-reacting to crisis, or not reacting at all for lack of capability to do otherwise. The key

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<sup>3</sup>W. W. Kaufman, The McNamara Strategy, p. 59.





to this strategy and its essential departure from the Eisenhower strategy was that the Kennedy administration was "willing" to expend the necessary resources to provide the requisite capabilities.

Specific priority objectives to this end were, first, to attain numerical superiority in missiles, and thus assure the United States a positive second-strike capability, that is, a force which could survive a massive surprise nuclear attack and still strike a decisive counterblow. In March, 1961, President Kennedy sent a special budget message to the Congress requesting an additional \$650 million for such a purpose. He said, "Our strategic arms and defenses must be adequate to deter any deliberate nuclear attack on the United States or our allies by making clear to any potential aggressors that sufficient retaliatory forces will be able to survive a first strike and penetrate his defenses in order to inflict unacceptable losses upon him."<sup>4</sup>

The second priority objective was the improvement of America's limited war capability, and in May, 1961,

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<sup>4</sup>J. F. Kennedy, "Special Message to the Congress on the Defense Budget March 28, 1961," American Foreign Policy Reader, H. H. Ransom, ed., p. 199.



President Kennedy again went before the Congress to request additional funding to this end. Immediate action was then taken to reorganize the Army's divisional structure, increase its non-nuclear firepower, improve its tactical and strategic mobility, and provide it with the most modern conventional equipment. The Marine Corps was to be increased to 190,000 men.<sup>5</sup>

Within the first years of the Kennedy administration, the majority of the proposed "quick fixes" had been implemented. Production rate for the Minuteman ICBM was doubled, one-half of SAC's bombers were on fifteen-minute ground alert, SAC's airborne alert was significantly increased, the Polaris submarine program was greatly accelerated--including ten additional boats to the planned force--and the command and control system for the strategic nuclear force was improved.<sup>6</sup> In the conventional or limited war area, Army combat divisions had increased from 11 to 16, with the strategic reserve in the United States increased from 5 to 10 divisions.

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<sup>5</sup>J. F. Kennedy, "Special Message to Congress 25 May 1961," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XLIV, No. 1146 (June 12, 1961), p. 906.

<sup>6</sup>Tarr, op. cit., p. 48.



The Navy and Marine amphibious force had increased by one-third, and long-range airlift had been appreciably augmented.<sup>7</sup> In this short period of one year, America's war-making capability had been improved across the board, and by 1963 the entire military strategy and forces of the United States had, with an accompanying twenty per cent increase in defense spending, been completely revamped, as well as having a shift in the very process by which decisions would be made within the Pentagon. A eulogizer of President Kennedy and Secretary McNamara, while reviewing these significant accomplishments, said, "The President himself played a vital role in sponsoring major adjustments in the style and substance of the nation's defense effort . . . . If Kennedy was the patron of new departures in the realm of national security, McNamara has been their architect and engineer."<sup>8</sup> While the dynamic efforts of President Kennedy and the administrative brilliance of Secretary McNamara are not disputed, there would, nevertheless, be a loss of perspective if it were assumed that the

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 121-122.

<sup>8</sup>Kaufman, op. cit., p. ix.



conceptualization and implementation of a strategic program of such magnitude as "Flexible Response" was due wholly to the perceptiveness, brilliance, and competence of these individuals. Such a view would tend to ignore a number of political and practical facts of life. First, that executive perceptiveness, brilliance, and competence are not always marketable commodities within the context of America's legislative process. Second, and most important, the successful implementation of a major and appreciably different strategic program, with all that implies in terms of philosophies, loyalties, money, and material, would presuppose a mood or climate, on the part of a majority in both Houses of Congress, favorable toward more defense spending and for a more balanced and flexible defense posture. A favorable climate or mood obviously implies that such changes in strategic concepts and associated force and material levels of readiness were not new or novel issues before the Congress, but rather issues that had been considered before, and at this point in time now met with sufficient approval to carry them into law. A more realistic possibility, then, is that the Kennedy Administration implemented or pulled together, in a most impressive fashion, a strategic concept and associated military programs that in many





respects had been evolving within the Congress over a period of years.

Senator Richard B. Russell, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, once said, "God help the American people, if Congress starts legislating strategy."<sup>9</sup> That statement, plus a cursory perusal of the organizational breakdown of the Senate and House Armed Services and Appropriations Committees, which would reveal nothing on strategic deference or limited war, might lead to a conclusion that the Congress is neither motivated nor organized to exert influence or play a part in the formulation of strategic military policy. This, combined with a record of general unwillingness on the part of the Congress to exercise a veto over strategic programs proposed by the Executive would seem to lend even more credence to such a conclusion, and would tend to buttress a commonly expressed view that Congress has contributed little of benefit to defense policy since 1945.

Yet such a conclusion, with its accompanying harsh judgment as to the Congressional contribution, is not borne out by legislative history subsequent to the

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<sup>9</sup>S. P. Huntington, The Common Defense, pp. 134-135.



Korean War. Congress does exert and has exerted considerable influence on the formulation of strategic policy and programs. This influence is primarily felt through its review and rearrangement of the myriad budgetary figures that the executive branch annually presents for confirmation. In the course of this process of developing appropriations legislation, the Congress, or, more accurately, certain individuals or groups within the Congress, do attempt to exert pressure on behalf of specific military programs and/or policies. These individuals or groups thus assume a lobbying role with relation to the Executive, and they can, depending upon their influence and through public criticism and encouragement of Executive dissidents, force the Administration to pay a significant price for the strategic military policy it desires. This lobbying pressure, which can consist of individual representations, public hearings on appropriations, and/or manpower authorizations, or public investigations on critical strategic programs or situations, does enable the Congress to bring considerable pressure to bear upon the Administration and forces the administration to make public defense of its military policies.

What follows is an effort to assess the role of



Congress, both in its capacity to legitimize public policy and as a lobbying institution, incident to the creation and ultimate implementation of the strategic military programs of Flexible Response.



## CHAPTER I

### EARLY CONCERN 1953-1956

In January, 1954, the United States presented an ironic strategic paradox to the world. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, in an address before the Council on Foreign Relations, boldly stated that henceforth the United States would adhere to a doctrine of massive nuclear retaliation as a total solution to all military conflicts that might arise between the United States and the Communist bloc. The dilemma presented by this stance was, of course, that in a period when the nuclear advantage of the United States was clearly fading, the defense policy was placing ever-increasing emphasis and dependence upon nuclear weapons. Secretary Dulles expressed abhorrence at the possibility of the United States' having to conventionally meet all the possible local challenges that could be generated by the Communists. He said, "If an enemy could pick his time and place and method of warfare--and if our policy was to remain the traditional one of meeting aggression by direct and local opposition--then we need to be ready to fight in the Arctic and in the Tropics, in Asia, the Near East, and





in Europe; by sea, by land, and by air; with old weapons and with new weapons . . . . This could not be continued for long without grave budgeting, economic, and social consequences."<sup>10</sup> He concluded that the choice of massive retaliation as a strategy "permits of a selection of military means instead of a multiplication of means. As a result, it is now possible to get, and share, more basic security at less cost."<sup>11</sup> The basic criteria for the selection of massive retaliation as a national military strategy was most aptly summed up by "more basic security at less cost." This theme would predominate and characterize the Eisenhower Administration's approach to military strategy and preparedness over the next seven years. It is not implied that economy in defense spending is inherently evil or wrong, and every administration attempts to acquire more security for less money, yet the balance between security and cost is a delicate one, and emphasis on one at the expense of the other can be disastrous. The Eisenhower Administration, at this point in time, contended,

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<sup>10</sup>J. F. Dulles, "Address Before the Council on Foreign Relations, January 12, 1954," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XXX, No. 761 (January 25, 1954), p. 108.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.



however, that the balance to be struck by its "New Look" was one that America was badly in need of, particularly in view of the economic difficulties that were anticipated on termination of hostilities in Korea.

The "New Look" was an effort on the part of the Administration to reconcile military requirements and economic goals. It was founded, first, on the belief that the threat to America's security was both economic and military and that a proper balance between the two was necessary to meet the threat; second, on the belief that the dual threat was a continuing one, and, therefore, that once a proper balance was achieved it should be maintained indefinitely.<sup>12</sup> However, the adoption of massive retaliation, with all of its economic overtones, as the principal military strategy, plus other economic measures that had been initiated with respect to the military establishment in 1953, seemed to indicate to some Congressional and military observers that the emphasis of the Eisenhower Administration might be too heavy toward the economic side of the scale. Congressional and military concern over such matters was publicly

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<sup>12</sup>Huntington, op. cit., p. 76.



expressed as early as March, 1953. At this time, the United States was still sustaining relatively heavy casualties in Korea while negotiations were in progress, and yet, in spite of this, the Administration announced that the Army in 1954 would be reduced from 1,480,000 to 1,330,000 men, along with other reductions in funding for the Air Force and Navy.<sup>13</sup> During hearings before the House Appropriations Subcommittee, considering the Department of Defense Appropriations Bill for February, 1954, Democratic committee members, who were in a minority at this time, and several witnesses, were most vocal in their opposition to the proposed cuts. On March 11, 1953, General Van Fleet, who had just recently commanded the U.S. Eighth Army in Korea, testified that he was "disgusted with the luxury of America and the paucity of preparedness." He went on to say that "we must face up to the issue that our problems are those of world Communism, and that we are going to be faced with these problems for a long time to come. It is time we put our house in order . . . . I would provide more bullets and guns and dip into the gold and silver reserve we have

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 79.



built. We ought to have a stockpile of ammunition rather than a stockpile of gold."<sup>14</sup> General Van Fleet's views were well known beforehand, and his testimony, if somewhat emotional, was at least predictable.

A good counterpoint to General Van Fleet's testimony was the statement by Representative Carl Vinson of Georgia, before the same Subcommittee. Congressman Vinson, a Democrat and Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, spoke calmly and convincingly against the cutting of the defense budget from \$46.9 billion in 1953 to \$41.3 billion in 1954. He said, "You have certain fixed changes [and] some things you just can't cut. If you maintain this military strength and feed and equip it properly, you have to accept certain minimum expenditures . . . . If you are going to have an adequate defense, you're going to have big expenditures that aren't flexible."<sup>15</sup> The testimony of General Van Fleet and the statement by Representative Vinson, although differing widely in style, serve well as examples or samplings of the

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<sup>14</sup>U.S. Congress, House, Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, Hearings, Department of Defense Appropriations for 1954, 83rd Congress, 1st Session, 1953, pp. 297-298.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 739.





dissatisfaction that prevailed within certain quarters of the military, and the growing uneasiness within the Congress over the proposed economies of the "New Look." Later in the year, Secretary of the Army Stevens came under "heavy fire" before the same Subcommittee concerning the future combat effectiveness of the Army in its reduced state, but there was nothing quite as spectacular as General Van Fleet's testimony in March.

In terms of practical results in 1953, the concern expressed before and within the Congress did not significantly change the Administration's proposed reductions. The Army appropriation lost almost \$700 million in its passage through the House and Senate, while the Navy and the Air Force suffered reductions of approximately \$350 million and \$130 million respectively.<sup>16</sup> The most significant efforts on the part of the Congress to oppose these reductions consisted of a Democratic sponsored amendment in the House to increase Air Force appropriations by \$1.175 billion, and a Senate motion to expand aircraft procurement by \$400 million. Both proposals were defeated by a comfortable margin due to a relatively stable

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<sup>16</sup>E. A. Kolodziej, The Uncommon Defense and Congress, 1945-1963, p. 176.



Republican majority.<sup>17</sup>

In considering the Congressional appraisal of the 1954 defense budget, it would appear that too much of its attention was concentrated on strategic air power and that other equally significant facets of the Administration's proposals were uncritically accepted. Despite the fact that fighting was still heavy in Korea, and despite the likelihood of other limited wars being waged against the United States, Congress gave little pause to examine the defense budget in terms of its ability to provide the necessary military capabilities to cope with these varied challenges. The Congress, as was customary, had not exercised any veto over the Administration's strategic programs, but opposition to the economies of the "New Look" was now developing, primarily along party lines, and was gaining in strength.

In February, 1954, this increasing opposition again manifested itself during hearings before the House Appropriations Subcommittee, considering the Department of Defense Appropriations Bill for 1955. The main issue which provoked consternation among members of the

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., pp. 175-176.



Subcommittee was the projected force reductions in the Army proposed for 1955. The goal for June, 1955, was set at 1,100,000 men, which was a decline of 73,000 men from the goal set for that time a year earlier.<sup>18</sup> The reduction itself was sufficient to create a stir, but the acceleration of the reduction provided even more incentive for certain Democratic members of the Subcommittee to attack the programs of the "New Look." Secretary of Defense Wilson, in his prepared opening statement, summed up the Administration's position with respect to these reductions in saying, "As we increase the striking power of our combat forces by the application of technological advances and new weapons, and by the continuing growth of air power, the total number of military personnel can be reduced." He then added, "While this budget places proper emphasis on air power, there is still the need, and there will continue to be a need, for increasingly effective land, amphibious, anti-submarine and other forces."<sup>19</sup> The statement, while

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<sup>18</sup>Huntington, op. cit., p. 79.

<sup>19</sup>U.S. Congress, House, Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, Hearings, Department of Defense Appropriations for 1955, 83rd Congress, 2nd Session, 1954, p. 8.



attempting to justify conventional force reductions, at the same time emphasizes a continuing need for them. Wilson's remarks on conventional force requirements were certainly incompatible with the concept of massive retaliation as propounded by the Secretary of State the previous year and at the same time inconsistent with the action being taken by the Administration in across-the-board reductions in these forces. This apparent inconsistency was not lost on the committee, and immediate efforts were made to determine exactly what Secretary Wilson meant. Representative Mahon asked Wilson if, "in view of the increased emphasis on atomic retaliation . . . is there any basis for the charge that the budget tends to encourage the beginning of small fires short of a fire that would be sufficiently provocative to launch an all-out war?"<sup>20</sup> Secretary Wilson's answer, in short, was that emphasis on atomic retaliation was not really America's policy, and that the budget, as such, would not encourage small wars which could escalate into general war. This exchange represented one of the first public acknowledgments that the Administration was modifying its

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 92.





stand on massive retaliation, even though the standing conventional forces in NATO and the Far East had long been a tacit acknowledgment of the same thing.

The remainder of this particular hearing consisted primarily of skillful questioning on the part of Representative Sikes of Florida in drawing out the dissatisfaction of Army Chief of Staff, General Matthew Ridgway, over the projected Force reductions, and in baiting Army Secretary Stevens on the Army's so-called "mobile readiness." Representative Sikes, a Democrat and a Reserve Army General, was one of the foremost critics of the Administration's defense policies and a leading proponent of a more flexible national strategy based upon balanced military forces. Although Representative Sikes was hampered by his minority position on the Subcommittee, he was able to get General Ridgway, whose later writings on U.S. military posture would cause a significant stir, to acknowledge that the combat readiness of the Army was being adversely affected by the force reductions, and that the Administration was taking a gamble in effecting these reductions before sufficient tactical nuclear weapons were available to "replace" conventional manpower. Sikes was also able to make the point that the mobile readiness of the Strategic Army was



not a reality. The airlift capability for such an endeavor was simply not being developed.<sup>21</sup>

In the course of this hearing, minority members of the Subcommittee also reacted unfavorably to proposed reductions in the Navy and Marine Corps. However, the principal target for the proposed cuts was, and would continue to be, the Army.

The Senate Appropriations Committee, in considering the Department of Defense appropriations for 1955, concurred with the Administration and House recommendation to reduce the Army appropriation, but recommended increases for the Navy and Air Force. The Committee also noted, probably for the first time publicly, that something might be remiss in the nation's guided missile program. The Senate report said, in part, "Testimony both on and off the record focused the Committee's attention on what appears to be a disorganized situation relating to the guided missile program."<sup>22</sup> This brief

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<sup>21</sup>U.S. Congress, House, Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, Hearings, Department of the Army Appropriations for 1955, 83rd Congress, 2nd Session, 1954, pp. 54-56.

<sup>22</sup>U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Appropriations, Report, Department of Defense Appropriations Bill 1955, Report No. 1582, 83rd Congress, 2nd Session, 1954, p. 2.



observation was an initial indicator of a legislative concern that would later develop into something approaching a national crisis.

The end result of the legislative action in 1954, with respect to strategic military programs, was substantially the same as 1953. The Administration proceeded to effect the projected reductions as planned, and again the Congress did not appreciably influence or interfere with the strategic programs. Generally, the hearings on the February 1955 defense budget were disappointing. Most of the majority members of Congress received the "New Look" sympathetically and few did so thoughtfully. Assertions by the Administration that the "New Look" was a radical departure from past defense policies was generally accepted at face value with only a limited number of legislators publicly expressing doubts as to whether this really was the case. No deep probes were conducted by the Appropriations or Armed Services Committees into the assumptions on which the New Look rested, but rather they defined their review function narrowly, devoting most of their energies to securing the same amount of military capacity advocated by the President, but at a lower cost.

The legislative protestations had become somewhat



louder and more vociferous, but nothing had really changed. Thus, in January, 1955, President Eisenhower could proudly declare that a \$7.4 billion tax reduction was due entirely to large cuts within the government. What was not readily apparent from this statement was that the majority of these cuts had come out of national security.<sup>23</sup>

The year 1955 promised to be a more difficult period for the Administration's "New Look" policies. The Democratic victory in 1954 swelled the number of opponents to the Eisenhower military program and brought some of them to posts on the House and Senate Appropriations and Armed Services Subcommittees. The 1954 setback of the French in Indo-China also increased Congressional concern over the adequacy of the New Look. Indo-China had exposed a glaring weakness in America's military capacity. There simply were not sufficient ground forces to intervene effectively.

In military posture briefings before the House Armed Services Committee in January, 1955, it was readily apparent from the exchanges that ensued that the legis-

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<sup>23</sup>Huntington, op. cit., p. 76.





lators were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the long, rambling, evasive, and sometimes contradictory answers provided by Secretary of Defense Wilson in response to questions concerning strategic military planning, particularly those effecting force level reductions. In his opening statement, Secretary Wilson reiterated the strategy of primary reliance on strategic nuclear forces, and again gave minimal deference to forces required to oppose local aggression.<sup>24</sup> Massive retaliation, as conceived by John Foster Dulles, was apparently being permanently laid to rest, yet the Administration's commitment to the development and maintenance of conventional forces to accommodate lesser aggressions could hardly be construed as substantial.

The Committee members immediately broached the issue of reduction in conventional forces and the effect that such reductions would have on America's general and limited war capability. Representative Vinson inserted a letter into the record which he had previously sent to

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<sup>24</sup>U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, Hearings, Sundry Legislation Affecting the Naval and Military Establishment (Briefings on National Defense), 84th Congress, 2nd Session, 1955, p. 204.



Secretary Wilson. The letter, which expressed his concern over continuing force reductions, said in part, "The Department of Defense convinced Congress last year that it was essential to the defense of this country to maintain an end strength of 3,032,000 men on June 30, 1955. Upon what basis does the Department now find that it was in error in recommending the end strength? My candid observation at this point . . . is that it might be wise . . . to put on the brakes for the reduction plan for this final year."<sup>25</sup> From the testimony that followed, it appeared that a consensus of the Committee agreed with Vinson's view. In the course of this hearing, Secretary of the Navy Thomas acknowledged that any future cuts in the Navy would jeopardize the proper defense of the country,<sup>26</sup> and General Ridgway emphatically stated that, in his opinion, the proposed 140,000-man cut in the Army would further jeopardize national security.<sup>27</sup> The Committee members also expressed indignation over the fact that the Department of Defense had proceeded to reduce the Army below the strength for which the Congress had

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 215.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., pp. 275-276.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 344.



appropriated funds in the previous year, and that this had been done without consultation or notice to the Congress.<sup>28</sup> The propriety of this action is not a matter for consideration here. What is germane is that the sensibilities of the Congress had been offended, and the rather offhand manner in which the action was explained only added to the aggrievement. The bad feeling generated in this dispute over carefully guarded prerogatives and separation of powers would cause the Administration considerable difficulty in the months to come.

This particular issue was one of the first taken up by the House Appropriations Subcommittee in the January, 1955, hearings considering the Department of Defense Appropriations for 1956. Representative Sikes immediately confronted Secretary of Defense Wilson with the problem. Wilson's reply to Sikes' inquiry as to why the Congress was not consulted prior to reduction of the Army below authorized strength verged on the contemptuous. He said, "Well, I never thought much about that, to tell you the truth."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., pp. 311-312.

<sup>29</sup>U.S. Congress, House, Subcommittee of the



Wilson, as well as being generally offensive in the course of the hearing, was also unconvincing on several critical issues. When asked if the reduction in conventional forces would not invite other situations like Korea, he replied dogmatically, "I can answer that one cold by saying that there is no such situation."<sup>30</sup>

Wilson was equally unpersuasive when confronted with the fact that the latest reductions within the Army were done without consultation with the Army Chief of Staff as to the effects of such reductions, and further that such reductions did not have the support of a majority of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In reply, Wilson said, "I do not think it is unusual. I think it happened many times before."<sup>31</sup> For a man presenting increasingly unpopular programs to a now Democratic-controlled and therefore increasingly hostile Congress, the casual indifference verging on contempt displayed by Wilson in his exchanges with the Committee members could only result

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Committee on Appropriations, Hearings, Department of Defense Appropriations for 1956, 84th Congress, 1st Session, 1955, p. 28.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 27.





in compounding the Administration's problem of implementing the policies of the "New Look."

Increasing Congressional resistance to the "New Look" was more apparent in the Senate at this time. There the Appropriations Committee recommended that the Army appropriation be increased over the House recommendation by \$235,000, the Air Force increased by a "whopping" \$337,859,170, and the Navy and Marine Corps reduced by \$48,834.<sup>32</sup> Senator Stuart Symington, however, led the Democratic majority in a fight to amend the Appropriations Committee's report upward, particularly the Navy and Marine Corps figure. He proposed a \$46 million increase in Marine Corps personnel funds to raise the force from 190,000 to 215,000 men during Fiscal Year 1956. In a close forty-to-thirty-nine vote, Symington's amendment carried.<sup>33</sup> This limited victory was quickly undone, however, when the Administration impounded most of the extra funds which were provided.

Congress ultimately approved reductions in both

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<sup>32</sup>U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Appropriations, Report, Department of Defense Appropriations Bill 1956, Report No. 545, 84th Congress, 1st Session, 1955.

<sup>33</sup>Kolodziej, op. cit., p. 225.



the Army and the Navy (exclusive of the Marine Corps personnel increase) appropriations, and an increase for the Air Force. The Air Force increase was actually in keeping with the Administration's emphasis on strategic air power, and therefore cannot be construed as being in opposition to the "New Look." The Marine Corps increase actually represented the sole significant Congressional redirection of the Administration's defense policies. It was the most propitious sign of the rising doubts about the "New Look" programs, and of Congress' growing interest in deciding for itself what was the actual defense capability of the nation.

The second "New Look" budget of 1956 had, therefore, experienced far more serious resistance in passing through Congress. Receptivity to the Administration's military policies had worn considerably thinner in the course of one year. There had developed a sharper sense of scepticism among the House and Senate Appropriations and Armed Services Committees as to the political and military considerations underpinning the "New Look." It was obvious that legislative pressure on the Executive to provide more viable answers to the question of how the United States could retain a powerful military posture in the face of



continuing force and service appropriation reductions was increasing significantly.

The House Appropriations Subcommittee's examination of the Fiscal Year 1957 defense budget was particularly searching when compared with preceding years. It was apparent that some Committee members were attempting to conceptualize in defense program terms or policies rather than solely in categories of financial management or spending ceilings. The Senate Appropriations Committee also took a much closer look at the budget in terms of policy ramifications, and recommended significant increases for both the Army and the Navy over the Fiscal Year 1956 appropriation, and another huge increase of over two billion dollars for the Air Force.<sup>34</sup>

However, the Symington hearings on air power overshadowed the appropriations review in public importance, and had a detectable influence on the Senate's recommendation to increase the Air Force appropriation. In large part, as a result of these hearings, the shortcomings of the nation's air power capability became one

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<sup>34</sup>U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Appropriations, Report, Department of Defense Appropriations Bill 1957, Report No. 2260, 84th Congress, 2nd Session, 1956.



of the major issues of the 1956 Presidential campaign.

In spite of the increasing criticism of its military programs, from both the military establishment and the Congress, the Administration still publicly contended that, regardless of reductions in service funding and manpower, the United States was militarily stronger than ever before. Secretary of State Dulles in May, 1956, told the world that "The United States . . . has itself made a considerable aggregate reduction in the number of men under arms [and] we have felt that we were stronger as a result of our shifts. They did not involve any diminution in our military power . . . ." <sup>35</sup> However, this view received a most substantial "lambasting" with the publication of General Matthew B. Ridgway's memoirs in 1956. General Ridgway, Army Chief of Staff from 1953 to 1956, had retired on 30 June 1955, and his memoirs entitled Soldier had considerable impact on the Congress. The General, during his tenure as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had continually opposed the force and fund reductions to the Army, and by the time of his

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<sup>35</sup>J. F. Dulles, "News Conference on 22 May 1956," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XXXIV, No. 884 (June 4, 1956), p. 921.





retirement he was held in considerable disfavor by the Administration. In his memoirs he first pointed out that further planned reductions in the Army would incapacitate it as an effective fighting force. He said that "to slash the forces in uniform from 1,500,000 to 1,000,000 by the summer of 1956 . . . would so weaken the Army that it could no longer carry out its missions."<sup>36</sup> Second, he expressed the view that not only the Army was becoming impotent, but the entire present United States military forces were inadequate in strength, and improperly proportioned to meet these commitments. General Ridgway's most telling point, however, was his judgment that under the present administration national security was being determined by a politically "established" budget instead of military requirements recommended by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In this regard he said, "The 1955 budget was a directed verdict as were the Army budgets for 1956 and 1957. The force levels provided in all these were not primarily based on military needs. They were not based on the freely reached conclusions of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They were squeezed between the framework of

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<sup>36</sup>M. B. Ridgway, Soldier: The Memoirs of Matthew B. Ridgway, p. 288.



arbitrary manpower and fiscal limits."<sup>37</sup> He summed up by stating that the military budget itself was "not based so much on military requirements, as on what the economy of the country could stand, as on political considerations."<sup>38</sup>

General Ridgway's observations on the budget vis-a-vis national security were a most astute evaluation of the more significant factors affecting America's military strategy in the mid- and late 1950's. The fact that budgetary considerations could prevail over realistic military requirements, with the obvious attendant risk involved, revealed a most serious, if not the most serious, flaw in the Eisenhower Administration's approach to strategic military planning.

General Ridgway also proposed a strategy and force structure that he felt were essential for the security of the United States. He said, "We must possess the power of swift and devastating retaliation. At the same time we must possess the capability for selective retaliation [to enable the United States] to apply

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., pp. 288-289.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 272.



whatever degree of force a particular situation demanded."<sup>39</sup> The force required to implement this strategy "must be a properly proportioned force of all arms, so deployed in danger spots around the world so that each different component--land, sea, and air--can bring its own special forms of fire power most effectively to bear, as a member of a combined force of all arms. It must be adequately trained, properly armed, highly mobile, and strong in the active elements which can strike back without delay in answer to any armed attack."<sup>40</sup> These recommendations were, for all intents and purposes, the foundation for the strategic concept of Flexible Response, and General Ridgway's successor, General Maxwell Taylor, would enlarge upon them and in concert with a growing consensus in the Congress strive to implement them.

Reaction to Soldier was varied and heated. These were most serious allegations, and if true, or even partially true, the Administration stood accused of hazarding national security for impressive budget reductions. Those in Congress who disagreed with these

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 274.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 293.



views would claim that Ridgway was a narrow, dissatisfied soldier who was bitter over the lessening role of the Army. Those who agreed would and did claim that the General merely substantiated what had been suspected all along.

Regardless of initial reaction, Soldier came at a time when a large and growing group within the Congress were beginning to have serious misgivings about America's military posture, and Ridgway's work could not help but confirm such misgivings and add impetus to the efforts to do something about it.

Up to this point, however, Congress, by and large, had only sparingly used its power over military appropriations to legislate defense policy directly. Only in striving to stabilize the Marine Corps, and in substantially increasing the Air Force appropriation, had it specifically attempted to compel the administration to spend funds over and above what had been proposed, and these efforts were not wholly successful. In terms of influencing the Administration's strategic military policies, they were relatively insignificant. The Congress, as was traditional, had generally refused to veto the Executive's military proposals, and by June, 1956,





the "New Look" was achieving, and even ahead of, its original goals. The Army manpower reductions were carried out almost as scheduled, and by the Fall of 1956 it was down to one million men.<sup>41</sup> The Eighty-fourth Congress, while more critical of the "New Look," did not succeed in departing significantly from it.

The Congress was, however, obviously becoming more agitated over these matters and the Administration could certainly anticipate far stronger resistance to its strategic military policies than it had in the past.

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<sup>41</sup>Huntington, op. cit., p. 79.



## CHAPTER II

### MOUNTING CRISIS 1957-1959

The anticipated Congressional pressure on the Administration to justify its strategic policies and programs materialized almost immediately in 1957 despite somewhat dampened enthusiasm among the Democratic critics resulting from the re-election of President Eisenhower during the previous year. The Congress, however, still remained under Democratic control, and the annual military posture briefings before the House Armed Services Committee, in January, 1957, presented the first opportunity to take the "New Look" to task.

Although there were many facets of the Administration's national security policy which the Committee members did not find to their liking, that which disturbed them most was the Administration's reduction of forces below the level for which the Congress had appropriated funds, plus not expending other appropriated funds for equipment procurement as had been directed by the Congress. This issue had arisen before, but the Administration now appeared to be following these procedures at more frequent intervals, and this, combined with increasing



scepticism as to the adequacy of America's military capability, tended to make it a matter of greater significance and concern. Exchanges between Committee members and Secretary of Defense Wilson clearly established the Administration's position in this regard. Wilson was most emphatic when he told the Committee that he would adhere to the President's decision and orders regardless of conflicting directives emanating from the Congress.<sup>42</sup> This certainly is not an unusual position for a Cabinet officer to take, yet from the clamor that ensued it was obvious that the members of the Committee took this as a direct challenge to their constitutional prerogatives. If nothing else, this at least foretold of increased efforts on the part of the Congress to preclude the Executive from ignoring legislative directives as to the spending of appropriated funds in the future.

In the course of these same briefings, General Maxwell Taylor, the new Army Chief of Staff, acknowledged under heavy questioning that recent Army structural

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<sup>42</sup>U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, Hearings, Sundry Legislation Affecting the Naval and Military Establishment (Military Posture Briefing), 85th Congress, 2nd Session, 1957, p. 125.



organizations were due entirely to budgetary cuts and not to military requirements. Concern was also expressed over the deteriorating condition of the Navy, and several Committee members were of the opinion that additional funds should be appropriated immediately for its improvement.

In general, the Congressional views expressed in these briefings were indicative of the growing legislative cynicism toward the bland reassurances put forth by the Administration with regard to America's military capability. It was apparent that Congress would, in the future, be assessing Executive justification of national security policies far more carefully and critically than it had in the past.

One Administration justification for continued force reductions which came under close scrutiny by the Congress in 1957 was that of tactical nuclear weapons. What with the vast increase in fire power afforded by these weapons, it was contended that fewer conventional ground forces would be required. Secretary Wilson told the Congress in early 1957 that American defense policy "is based on the use of atomic weapons in a major war and is based on the use of such atomic weapons as would be





militarily feasible and usable in a smaller war . . . .

In other words, the smaller atomic weapons, the tactical weapons, in a sense have now become the conventional weapons."<sup>43</sup> What Secretary Wilson did not say was that, relative to the support of large conventional forces, these weapons were cheap. This fact was not lost, however, upon the members of the House Subcommittee on Appropriations during hearings on the Department of Defense Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1958. Representative Sikes, a long-time Army benefactor and foremost House critic of the Administration's nuclear strategies, asked Admiral Radford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a long-time Army detractor and foremost military spokesman for the Administration's nuclear strategies, if it were not true that "We feel we cannot afford to take to the country a budget large enough to permit the retention of conventional preparedness plus atomic preparedness . . . ." <sup>44</sup>

Admiral Radford replied that this was impossible, and, further, that to maintain such a conventional force would

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<sup>43</sup>Kaufman, op. cit., p. 25.

<sup>44</sup>U.S. Congress, House, Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, Hearings, Department of Defense Appropriations for 1958, 85th Congress, 1st Session, 1957, p. 125.



imply to the enemy that we would not fight a nuclear war. Sikes countered with a reply which reflected an astute appreciation of strategic military realities. He said, "I think if you tell the enemy what you are not going to do and what you are not going to be prepared to do that you are, by such action, automatically inviting him to use the methods and the weapons that you are not prepared to resist."<sup>45</sup>

In the course of this same hearing, Sikes also broached the subject of America's inadequate military airlift capability. This particular problem had been comprehensively covered during the hearings on air power conducted by the Senate Armed Services Committee in 1956, and numerous significant weaknesses had been revealed. In the face of this well-substantiated evidence, it was somewhat startling when Admiral Radford, in response to Sikes' query, said that he and the Joint Chiefs of Staff were well satisfied with this capability.<sup>46</sup> Radford's inability to recognize, or at least to acknowledge, well-established fact added substantially to growing Congres-

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 128.



sional scepticism with respect to the Administration's strategic military policies.

However, in spite of the decreasing credibility as to the efficacy of these policies, the Senate Appropriations Committee in June, 1957, nevertheless made recommendations that, with the exception of the Navy, were entirely compatible with the desires of the Executive. The Army's appropriation was to be reduced by approximately \$175 million under Fiscal Year 1957, the Air Force reduced approximately \$93 million, and the Navy increased approximately \$64 million.<sup>47</sup> The recommended reduction in Air Force funding was particularly surprising in view of the substantial increases recommended in the two preceding years, plus the findings of the Senate Air Power hearings in 1956. The rationale for this decision and the general dampening of anti-Administration spirit that had prevailed in this Committee the previous year was not satisfactorily borne out in the hearings or report. One explanation that has been given is that, in view of

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<sup>47</sup>U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Appropriations, Report, Department of Defense Appropriations Bill 1958, Senate Report No. 543, 85th Congress, 1st Session, 1957.



President Eisenhower's re-election in 1956, Congressional critics thought it politically unwise at this time to aggressively pursue efforts to modify programs which apparently met with substantial public approval.

In any event, the Administration was in no way precluded from executing its stated objectives, and throughout the summer and early fall of 1957 the projected force level reductions and other "economies" were carried out. The Army lost two divisions, the Air Force was cut back to 117 wings, and the Navy, in spite of the Senate Appropriations Committee recommendation, lost 29 combatant ships and 59 other vessels.<sup>48</sup>

In this same period, the Executive was presented with the final report of the Gaither Committee. This ad hoc committee was established by President Eisenhower to conduct a careful evaluation of America's national security posture. Although the report was not made public, its findings came to be known. In substance, it said that if the United States did not immediately change its present strategic and military policies it was in danger of becoming a second-class power. The report made

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<sup>48</sup>Huntington, op. cit., p. 95.





three major recommendations: first, reduce the vulnerability of the Strategic Air Command and insure second-strike capabilities sufficient to pose unacceptable losses to the USSR; second, develop conventional war capabilities; and, third, reorganize the Pentagon and particularly strengthen the unified and specified commands.<sup>49</sup>

While still digesting the harsh judgments and recommendations of a hand-picked partisan committee, the Administration and the world were confronted with the Soviet launching of Sputnik I on October 4, 1957, followed by Sputnik II less than a month later.

Sputnik stirred the whole of Congress and its many separate and loosely related policy processes into action. In the wake of the October launching, four distinct investigations were inaugurated to ascertain American progress in satellite and missile development. The most significant of these was the investigation of the Senate Preparedness Subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee. This was the beginning of a long series of hearings over the next two years inquiring into what came to be known as the "missile gap." For the

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., pp. 107-108.



moment, however, the Subcommittee, acknowledging that the United States was behind the Soviet Union in missile and satellite technology, wanted to know why. The answer that came out of this investigation was that budget considerations had prevailed over research and development requirements. General Maxwell Taylor, when queried on the Army's role in the nation's missile program, which at this time was substantial, not only pinpointed the inadequate funding provided for missile research, but also showed that the Army, in an effort to compensate for the shortage of funds and yet still develop a missile program, was adversely affecting other essential Army capabilities. He said, "We have found our missile programs have lived up to their technological expectations, but unfortunately they have come high in dollar costs. So within the comparatively limited budgets we have had to work with, to a large extent we have had to pay for the missile program out of what you might call conventional equipment."<sup>50</sup> General Taylor's remarks generally reflected the consensus service position

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<sup>50</sup>U.S. Congress, Senate, Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, Hearings, Inquiry into Satellite and Missile Programs, 85th Congress, 1st and 2nd Sessions, 1957, p. 477.



on conduct of the missile program. An ironic observation that could be made at this point is that an Administration which placed almost complete emphasis on a strategy of supremacy of airborne nuclear retaliatory forces, at the expense of conventional forces, was now finding itself deficient in both.

Recognizing this, the Congress, particularly the Appropriations and Armed Services Committees, began to adopt a more acutely conscious interest in policy questions. It would become obvious in the hearings following Sputnik that these committees were placing more emphasis on consideration of policy decisions which create the forces which require support, rather than just concentrating on the details of support itself. This Congressional policy orientation was given further impetus by what appeared to be a lethargic response on the part of the Executive to the Sputnik launchings.

It was anticipated that the Administration would act immediately to accelerate missile programs and implement the recommendations of the Gaither Report, yet, in spite of these events, the Administration only reluctantly agreed to increases in the long-range missile programs.

Hearings concerning supplemental appropriations,



grudgingly requested by the Executive, for purposes of expediting these programs, were conducted before the House Appropriations Subcommittee in early January, 1958. The amount of funding requested by the Administration was not, in the opinion of the Democratic majority, proportional to the urgency of requirements for an accelerated ballistic missile program. This, and the fact that 1958 was a Congressional election year, combined to make this hearing a most trying experience for Administration witnesses. A general increase in public interest in defense matters subsequent to Sputnik also meant that Democratic Committee members were "playing to a larger audience" than they ever had before. They therefore took every opportunity to not only demonstrate the culpability of the Administration with respect to the United States' lagging the Soviet Union in missile and space technology, but also to show that, in view of the paucity of funds requested, no real effort was being made to correct this condition. This last point was not difficult in the making, for testimony by Administration witnesses throughout the hearing seemed to give credence to the assertion that the Executive was not as disturbed about this situation as was the public or Congress, and was taking a less than dynamic approach





toward its resolution. This was certainly confirmed when Secretary of the Air Force Douglas, who, when asked what could be done to accelerate the nation's space program, replied that "the extent to which we are behind in ballistic missiles at the moment is something that cannot immediately be cured by dollars."<sup>51</sup> Representative Sikes, therefore, did the Administration no injustice when, in addressing the Secretary of Defense, he said, "Mr. Secretary, we have appropriated to the Department of Defense for a number of years substantially all of the money which has been requested for the defense of the Nation. This is particularly true in the field of research and development. Despite the fact that we have relied on the information given us by the Department of Defense and have voted substantially all of the money required, particularly in these critical fields, we now find that we are lagging in certain very important areas, perhaps dangerously so . . . . Seemingly we knew nothing until the launching of the satellites about this phenomenal Russian progress. If anyone in our Government knew some-

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<sup>51</sup>U.S. Congress, House, Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, Hearings, Supplemental Defense Appropriations for 1958, 85th Congress, 2nd Session, 1958, p. 119.



thing about it, no action was taken on the knowledge. The Congress was not requested to do anything about it."<sup>52</sup> While Sikes' rebuke was admittedly a declaration of Congressional innocence in these matters, particularly in view of the Democratic majority since 1955, it nevertheless was substantially true. The Congress had in the past, with but few exceptions, provided funds to the Executive for national security on a basis that had preserved Presidential initiative and discretion. From this point on, however, Congressional criticism of the Administration's strategic programs greatly intensifies and begins to solidify into a consensus view. Whereas in the past, legislative intervention, and even initiative, in defense policy had been episodic and desultory, it now would become a persistent characteristic of the Eighty-fifth and Eighty-sixth Congresses.

Increasing Congressional interest and concern over defense policy decisions as such, vice the myriad minutiae resulting from such decisions, was reflected in the January and February 1958 hearings before the House Appropriations Subcommittee considering the Department of Defense

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., pp. 19-20.



Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 1959. The Committee had before it a recently published study on national defense entitled, International Security: The Military Aspect. This private study, which had been initiated by Nelson Rockefeller and financed by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, was extremely critical of the Administration's strategic military policies, and generally substantiated those views being expressed by a growing consensus within the Congress. Democratic Committee members, therefore, enthusiastically entered sections of the study into the record. The report said, in part, that "Programs of great importance to the United States now suffer from insufficient funds . . . . The result has been a serious imbalance in our military preparedness. Recent budgetary ceilings could be maintained only by a reduction in forces in all services, a process which has been slowly going on for the past three years. The budgetary squeeze affected not only force levels, it also slowed down our research effort in many fields, causing us to lose ground to the USSR."<sup>53</sup> The report's recommendations for correction

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<sup>53</sup>U.S. Congress, House, Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, Hearings, Department of Defense Appropriations for 1959, 85th Congress, 2nd Session, 1958, p. 53.



of these conditions ranged from modernizing Army equipment and increasing troop airlift and sealift, to changing methods of budgeting within the Department of Defense. The report also commented upon problems with respect to strategic planning within the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It said, "The roles and missions assigned to the individual military services have become competitive rather than complementary . . . . The present organization and responsibilities of the Joint Chiefs of Staff preclude the development of a comprehensive and coherent strategic doctrine for the United States."<sup>54</sup> This observation on organizational obstacles and other problems within the Joint Chiefs of Staff, combined with similar observations by the Gaither Committee, and growing legislative dissatisfaction over "service rivalries," would result in the Administration presenting a Department of Defense reorganization plan to the Congress later in the year.

In addition to exploring the criticisms set forth in the Rockefeller Report, the Committee, led by Representative Sikes, also dramatized the growing erosion of Army strength, the serious deficiency of the Nation's

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp. 57-58.





air lift capabilities, and, in general, the over-all paucity of the United States' limited war capability.

Hearings before the Senate Subcommittee on Department of Defense Appropriations in July, 1958, also reflected serious concern over policy aspects of America's strategic military programs. The ultimate recommendations of this Committee provided for increase in excess of one billion dollars for each of the military services over what had been appropriated in 1957. Out of this, Army equipment was to be modernized, strategic air power and troop airlift were to be increased, the Polaris submarine program was to be accelerated, new amphibious ships were to be constructed, the Minuteman and Hound Dog missile programs were to be accelerated, the Marine Corps was once again to be stabilized at 200,000 men, and the Army was to be increased from 870,000 to 900,000 men.<sup>55</sup> The President's ultimate refusal to spend most of the funds appropriated in the Fiscal Year 1959 defense bill effectively blunted this Congressional initiative and provided grounds for heated controversy at a later time.

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<sup>55</sup>U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Appropriations, Report, Department of Defense Appropriations Bill for 1959, Senate Report No. 1937, 85th Congress, 2nd Session, 1958, pp. 5-23.



The Congress did, however, enact legislation which forbade the President's committing any funds for Army National Guard personnel unless that force were kept at a level of 400,000 men.<sup>56</sup> Only in this peculiar area of Army reserve policy did the Congress specifically compel the Administration to spend additional funds to maintain the National Guard and Army reserves at Congressionally determined levels. It is generally interpreted that this was done in response to severe pressure from the civilian reserve constituency, and not as a Congressional initiative to affect strategic military policy, as were the other military appropriation increases ultimately impounded by the President.

By the end of 1958 the national security policy problems of the Administration had increased significantly. In the period of one year the nation was confronted with Quemoy-Matsu in the Far East, Lebanon in the Middle East, and portents of serious difficulties in Berlin. Each of these incidents exposed serious limitations, in terms of military capability, on the part of the United States. Quemoy-Matsu revealed just how thinly the Navy was

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<sup>56</sup>Kolodziej, op. cit., p. 484.



stretched in attempting to cover its global commitments. Lebanon, though hailed as a masterpiece of limited war strategy, in fact revealed long-suspected weaknesses in air lift and sea lift capacity. The threat of Berlin again raised serious questions as to the capability of America's conventional forces in Europe to militarily resolve that situation should it come to pass.

The defense policy problems of the Administration were further compounded by impressive Democratic gains in the 1958 Congressional elections--forty-eight seats in the House and fifteen in the Senate--<sup>57</sup> and by the "defection" of another highly respected military officer, Lieutenant General James Gavin. The General, on retiring as Director of the Army's Research and Development Command, had published a book entitled, War and Peace in the Space Age, which was highly critical of the Administration with respect to guided missile programs, particularly the adverse effects of arbitrary budget restrictions.<sup>58</sup>

However, in spite of increasing international

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., pp. 298-299.

<sup>58</sup>J. M. Gavin, War and Peace in the Space Age, pp. 153-154.



crisis and domestic criticism in 1958, the position of the Administration, with respect to defense spending, did not substantially change from the position that had been held at the beginning of the year. Some program adjustments had been made to increase the future effectiveness of the strategic deterrent forces, but nothing approaching the action demanded by Democratic Congressional critics had been accomplished.

The less than dynamic Executive response does not, however, take away from the fact that Congressional action on the Fiscal Year 1959 defense bill showed Congress in its best light to date. The Appropriations Subcommittees made a sincere and relatively successful review of the Administration's military program, and their foresightedness in recognizing deficiencies in the program, and efforts to legislate corrective action, even though to no avail, reflected increased Congressional interest in and comprehension of such matters. More significantly, it reflected an increased Congressional willingness to intervene in defense matters, even to the extent of initiating changes.

The Administration, however, chose to ignore the increasingly aggressive Congressional majority, and the Fiscal Year 1960 budget presented by the Executive closely





resembled the budget of the year before. Defense requests for new obligational authority were set at \$4.85 billion, approximately \$288 million less than the estimated appropriations for Fiscal Year 1959, and most of the extra funds appropriated by Congress in Fiscal Year 1959 were assigned to Fiscal Year 1960 programs. Not only had the Administration held the services to about the budgetary ceilings of the preceding year, but it also tied them again to the same percentage of funding authority that had prevailed since Fiscal Year 1959.<sup>59</sup>

The first six months of 1959 witnessed three major Congressional hearings concerning the strategic programs and military capabilities of the United States. Two of these hearings were before the Senate Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee, and the other was before the House Subcommittee on Department of Defense Appropriations. In all these hearings the Democratic majority missed no opportunity to exact the public "pound of flesh" from the Administration for the inflexible fiscal position that it had taken with respect to America's strategic military requirements. The tenor of Senator Lyndon Johnson's opening remarks before

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<sup>59</sup>Kolodziej, op. cit., pp. 287-288.



the January, 1959, Senate Preparedness Subcommittee and the Aeronautical and Space Science Committee hearings on missile and space activities, was indicative of the attitude and approach the Congress was assuming in these matters. He said, "A year ago this committee completed a series of hearings into the American satellite and missile programs. The conclusions, reached unanimously by this group, were not reassuring . . . . We not only reached conclusions, we also set forth recommendations--17 of them. We are here today to review the progress that has been made since those recommendations were made."<sup>60</sup> The Administration was to give an accounting, and the Democratic majority was obviously going to make it as revealingly unpleasant as possible.

With the exception of the House Appropriation proceedings, these hearings were not intended to produce legislation. They were, in part, a continuation of the partisan Democratic effort, which had commenced in 1954, to turn the defense issue to their advantage in the fight

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<sup>60</sup>U.S. Congress, Senate, Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services and Committee on Aeronautical and Space Sciences, Joint Hearings, Missiles and Space Activities, 86th Congress, 1st Session, 1959, pp. 1-2.



for additional Congressional seats, and ultimately for the Presidency, as well as an effort to increase pressure on the Executive to effect changes in strategic military programs.

The hearings were generally similar in their pursuit of these objectives in that all of them (a) took the Administration to task for the unsatisfactory status of America's military posture; (b) made stringent efforts to show that the Administration was not taking steps to improve that posture; (c) delineated corrective action with respect to specific programs; and (d) denounced repeatedly the primacy of budgetary considerations over military requirements.

The missile and space hearings in the Senate in January, 1959, while encompassing all the above areas of criticism, placed emphasis on budgetary considerations. This was due in part to the surprising opening statement of Defense Secretary McElroy to the effect that the Joint Chiefs of Staff "have said to me in writing that they consider that the fiscal year 1960 proposed expenditure figure is adequate to provide for the essential programs necessary for the defense of the Nation for the period under consideration."<sup>61</sup> While initially taken aback by

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 6.



this apparent "change of heart" on the part of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Committee members soon discovered that the senior military officers had also submitted written reservations as to the adequacy of the budget. These reservations were substantial, ranging from manpower shortages in the Army and Marine Corps to insufficient funding for modernization and procurement of Naval ships and aircraft.<sup>62</sup> Further testimony revealed that each of the service chiefs, as in years past, felt that the funding was grossly inadequate, and the Committee was quick to capitalize on what appeared to be "heavy-handed" coercion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff by the Administration.

Subsequent to rebuffing the Administration's effort to present a united front with respect to budget adequacy, the Committees proceeded to a consideration of specific strategic military programs. The hearing revealed or re-emphasized that: (a) the United States did not have a warning system against incoming ballistic missiles; (b) the Strategic Air Command was not on continuous airborne alert; (c) the United States was

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., pp. 21-23.





apparently voluntarily surrendering ICBM superiority to the Soviet Union; and (d) manpower cuts in the Army and Marine Corps had significantly reduced the capability of the United States to fight limited wars.<sup>63</sup>

America's limited war capability was also closely scrutinized during the January, 1959, House Subcommittee hearings on Department of Defense Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1960. This increasingly policy-oriented Subcommittee was again particularly concerned with the effect on America's military posture resulting from continued reductions in Army troop levels, and lack of progress in the modernization of Army equipment. The critical nature of such reductions was clearly brought out in the testimony of Defense Secretary McElroy, who acknowledged that the Army had not been reduced to 870,000 men as planned in 1958, because of the Lebanon crisis. Representative Mahon was quick to point out that "If we are on such a razor edge as to mean that you hesitate [to reduce forces] on account of Lebanon, where not a shot was fired, it would seem that you probably have cut your manpower levels a little too short in the

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<sup>63</sup>Ibid., pp. 40-75.



Army."<sup>64</sup> The point was well made, and it had been precipitated by the Administration's key witness.

The Appropriations Subcommittee then turned to a consideration of air lift and sea lift capability. Administration witnesses indicated that the Navy had just completed a study which revealed that its sea lift capability was satisfactory. In the face of testimony to the contrary over the past two years, the Committee was plainly sceptical. Representative Flood inquired, "Did that sealift include the 10-and 12-knot crates that they had listed here last year with the Navy?" When the answer was in the affirmative, Flood responded with "Wow!"<sup>65</sup> The Administration's claim that the present air lift capacity was also adequate resulted in similar expressions of doubt. When General Twining, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, indicated that United States air lift capacity was adequate to respond to any number of limited war situations, Representative Flood asked,

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<sup>64</sup>U.S. Congress, House, Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, Hearings, Department of Defense Appropriations for 1960, 86th Congress, 1st Session, 1955, p. 105.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 102.



"With what? Pigeons?"<sup>66</sup> The exchanges, while humorous on occasion, did not fail to effectively communicate the seriousness of such deficiencies.

The Congressional effort to emphasize these deficiencies and to "expose" the Executive continued in the special hearings before the Senate Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee in March and May, 1959. The hearings, entitled Major Defense Matters, occurred in two separate parts. The first, which took place in March, primarily addressed itself to specific strategic program deficiencies, while the second part, in May, dealt almost exclusively with budgetary considerations.

This two-part hearing also constituted the principal battleground between the Democratic Congressional majority and the Executive with respect to the dispute over unspent defense appropriations. The President's refusal to spend most of the extra funds appropriated by Congress in the Fiscal Year 1959 defense bill particularly rankled Congressional sensibilities, which are always alert and offended by any effort to infringe upon vested Congressional powers. The legislators, in

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<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 113.



this instance, were convinced that there had been a gross intrusion by the Executive. The Administration had released funds for only one of the four Polaris submarines which Congress had approved in 1958. The other three were to be included in the President's Fiscal Year 1960 program, and no further procurement funds were assigned to the program.<sup>67</sup> Army Chief of Staff General Maxwell Taylor, in response to queries from Senator Lyndon Johnson, also revealed that 210 million dollars appropriated for Army procurement had been withheld, and that an additional 37 million dollars for Army modernization, and over 6 million dollars for Army construction, had also not been authorized for expenditure.<sup>68</sup>

Constitutional prerogatives notwithstanding, it did appear, in the face of the recent Lebanon crisis and the potential crisis at Berlin, that the magnitude of appropriated funds withheld by the Executive was excessive.

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<sup>67</sup>Kolodziej, op. cit., p. 300.

<sup>68</sup>U.S. Congress, Senate, Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, Hearings, Major Defense Matters, 86th Congress, 1st Session, 1959, pp. 14-15.





The case made by the Administration in defense of such measures was not altogether convincing, and the Committee made the most of this lack of credibility throughout the hearing.

The March hearing provided the forum for a comprehensive voicing of Congressional dissatisfaction with the Nation's strategic military programs with particular emphasis on the inadequacy and vulnerability of SAC's ICBM force, deficiencies in the conventional Army forces, and the deteriorating condition of the Navy. Senator Henry M. Jackson, a long-time proponent of America's ballistic missile program, convincingly argued that the relatively invulnerable Minuteman ICBM was proceeding much too slowly.<sup>69</sup> General Maxwell Taylor for the first time publicly acknowledged that the U.S. Army in Europe, if it abstained from using nuclear weapons, could not defend itself with existing conventional forces against a full Soviet attack;<sup>70</sup> and Senator Johnson, while lauding the Navy's "blue and gold" attitude, pointed out that "This statement that there is always

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 126.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., p. 27.



going to be a Navy cannot be assumed unless some of these people stand up and fight for it . . . but if you have gotten only 15, 16, or 18 per cent of your ships modern since World War II, it seems to me that you had better be doing some modernization pretty quickly. If you do not . . . members of the committee believe pretty strongly that you are just not going to have a modern service at all."<sup>71</sup>

There were few, if any, areas of America's military posture that the Subcommittee had failed to touch on, and while much of this had been concerned with force levels and hardware, there nevertheless had also been some relatively penetrating observations made with respect to policy considerations underpinning the Administration's specific program decisions. In this regard, the issue of budgetary primacy over military requirements had been raised at increasingly frequent intervals. It therefore was anticipated that the Subcommittee would turn its attention, as it did in March, 1959, to a consideration of the Administration's budgetary process.

The objective of the Subcommittee's Democratic

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 156.



majority was obviously to publicly substantiate, if possible, the view that the Executive had in the past and did now place budgetary considerations above strategic military requirements. The Administration's objective was to effectively rebut these allegations, and the key witness upon which the hopes of both parties rested was Mr. Stans, Director of the Bureau of the Budget.

The fundamental considerations or questions to be resolved were: (a) Did the Bureau of the Budget establish arbitrary ceilings or limitations on the armed services regardless of stated requirements, as claimed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and (b) did the Bureau of the Budget recommend or direct that certain additional defense funds appropriated by the Congress not be expended. Mr. Stans' initial portrayal of the Bureau's role in these matters could hardly be construed as villainous. He said, "The Bureau of the Budget does not make war plans. It does not in any way plan or propose war strategy or anything of that type. These are matters determined by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the National Security Council, and the President. We do not set a dollar limitation on the programs of the Department of Defense in any sense."<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 218.



At another point he said, "I think there are many people who believe that we specifically and directly fix the level of expenditures for the Department of Defense, or that we specifically rule out programs or requests for money. We do not."<sup>73</sup> In response to questions concerning unspent defense appropriations, Stans emphatically stated that these funds had not been withheld on the recommendation of the Budget Bureau. In general, Mr. Stans presented a picture which sharply contrasted with that painted by the individual service chiefs, and it was apparent that the Committee members were initially taken aback by this aura of warm benevolence. However, under close questioning, particularly by Senator Johnson, a significantly different picture began to emerge. When heavily pressed, Stans' answers began to reveal a facet of the Budget Bureau's role in these matters that could hardly be construed as benevolent. Stans grudgingly acknowledged that ceilings or limits were imposed on the Department of Defense when he said, "The only limitation that was placed upon him [the Secretary of Defense] was that in the aggregate the Secretary would not ask for a greater budget for the Department of Defense than appeared in the budget document last January."<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 238.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 304.





If there still remained any doubts in this regard, they were summarily resolved when Stans angrily stated, "I think we all understand that demands for military programs can be almost unlimited. The budget is one device that we have for forcing the making of choices in the Department of Defense."<sup>75</sup> The most fundamental question had been answered. There were budgetary limitations imposed, and, with the Secretary of Defense being directed to remain within a previous year's budget, such limitations did appear to be unrelated to changing military requirements.

While Stans had unwillingly admitted to Executive limitations or ceilings, he would not, however, acknowledge that the Bureau of the Budget established these limitations. He consistently held to the end that his function was strictly recommendatory in nature, and that ultimate decisions in these matters were made by the President. Whether the Budget Bureau established the limitations or whether the President had done so was not really germane. The Administration stood exposed of placing budgetary considerations ahead of military requirements, and while

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 291.



this judgment was based on a more or less superficial exploration of the budgetary process, it was nevertheless substantially true. The hearing had admirably served the purpose for which it was intended. A comprehensive listing of well-substantiated deficiencies in America's strategic military programs had been developed, and the Administration's "primacy of budget" approach to military program decision-making had been reasonably well borne out. By mid-summer of 1959, it therefore appeared that momentum developed by the growing consensus within the Congress, favoring increased defense spending and a more balanced military posture, had developed to the point where substantial legislative intervention and/or initiative in these matters was imperative.

The Bomarc-Nike Hercules air defense missile dispute, which reached its climax at about this time, seemed to substantiate such a view. These two systems had been originally conceived as complementary air defense weapons; however, as the range differences between them narrowed, the two began to compete with each other. By mid-1959, the Congress faced the prospect of having to appropriate another billion dollars for Fiscal Year 1960, without much assurance that the Defense Department would



decide between the two systems. The Senate Armed Services Committee and the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee urged the Secretary of Defense to make a decision, and even authorized him to allocate funds between the two systems as he saw fit. Still no decision was made. Congressional patience in this matter was exhausted, and the House Appropriations Subcommittee, with surprising bi-partisan co-operation, cut \$162.7 million from the Bomarc program. While the House group was slashing Bomarc, the Senate Armed Services Committee was vetoing the Nike-Hercules program.<sup>76</sup> Both Committees called upon the Defense Secretary to develop a master plan for air defense. Forced by the Congress to make a decision in this regard, the Department of Defense produced a plan to save the air defense program before it was completely destroyed by the Congress. The plan reduced emphasis on defense against bombers, and the Nike-Zeus anti-missile system was upgraded as a response to the Soviet shift to long-range missiles. In keeping with these decisions, Congress provided \$137 million more for the Nike-Zeus program than the administration had wanted,

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<sup>76</sup>Kolodziej, op. cit., p. 305.



and Bomarc was cut by \$82 million.<sup>77</sup> Congressional initiative had, therefore, prompted the Defense Department to formulate a more effective plan, thereby preventing hundreds of millions of dollars in unnecessary duplication, and assisted the development of a more reliable air defense network.

The aggressive Congressional attitude and initiative with respect to strategic military matters, so prevalent in the preparedness hearings and air defense system dispute, were not reflected in the final defense appropriations bill approved by the Congress. The final bill totaled \$39.2 billion, which was actually \$19.9 million less than had been requested in the President's original defense proposal.<sup>78</sup>

Even though Congress had forced a decision on air defense, spurred progress in missile work, and wrought numerous changes in the defense measure itself, the fact remained that the President's original budgetary ceiling was essentially intact. The Congressional majority, though apparently convinced that such ceilings were

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 306.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., p. 310.





inhibiting the development of a more balanced and effective military establishment, was still not willing, at this point, to take the major step of breaking the Executive's budgetary bond principally fettering defense policy. Increasing public and legislative consternation over strategic military policy, and the prospect of a forthcoming President election, made it questionable, however, whether the Administration in 1960 could continue to presume upon the traditional unwillingness of Congress to act decisively in these matters.



### CHAPTER III

#### MANDATE FOR CHANGE 1960

Throughout the mid- and late 1950's it was clear that, without Presidential assent and co-operation, the Democratic majority within the Congress could not or would not force its strategic views and corresponding program requirements upon the Administration. Only once had restrictive requirements, compelling Executive revision of defense programs, been written into law, and this was in the very political area of Army Reserves and National Guard. Yet, in early 1960, with a Presidential election in the offing, it appeared that a sufficiently aggressive and cohesive Congressional majority had now been formed which was prepared and committed to underwriting significant changes in the Administration's strategic military programs, regardless of Executive desires.

Hearings before the House Appropriations Subcommittee considering the Fiscal Year 1961 defense bill seemed to substantiate this view. The hearing picked up almost where it had left off from the previous year,



except that hostile Democratic Committee members were far more aggressive in pressing their attack on the Administration's fiscal approach to strategic military programs. Two areas which received greatest emphasis in the course of these proceedings were troop airlift capability, and Army force levels and equipment modernization. Representative Flood angrily summed up the Committee consensus view on airlift when he said, "I consider the airlift problem, and I have been belaboring the point from this chair for many years, deadly serious for lack of it. I do not think the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and I do not think the Department of Defense and all of the secretaries and admirals and generals who have been coming up here, have been fair with us, have been telling us all the truth, and I have been resenting it almost to the point of wanting to charge them with conspiracy to keep from us the true facts on airlift . . . . The Secretary of Defense has been woefully derelict in not meeting this problem. The Air Force people have been pushing it under the rug for good or bad reasons, but that is the fact. It is the Achilles heel of this whole show. Thank God I hope and pray we are going to meet this problem, really meet it this time, instead of having these



10, 20, 30 road shows that have been performed here as special hearings on airlift."<sup>79</sup> Flood's observation, while highly emotional, was an accurate description, and no effective rebuttal was made by the Administration in the course of the hearing.

The consideration of Army force levels and modernization produced equally ineffective Administration rebuttals to Committee criticism, particularly after Army Secretary Brucker acknowledged that the Army's present force of approximately 870,000 men was "a minimum and marginal force and any less would not enable us to carry out the commitments we have."<sup>80</sup>

The entire hearing was a tension-filled, highly emotional proceeding which reflected both the increased political pressure of an election year and the heightened level of Congressional frustration that prevailed as a result of the continued lack of responsiveness on the part of the Executive in these matters.

The findings and emphasis of this hearing were

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<sup>79</sup>U.S. Congress, House, Subcommittee of Committee on Appropriations, Hearings, Department of Defense Appropriations for 1961, 86th Congress, 2nd Session, 1960, pp. 465-466.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 414.





admirably complemented by the January, 1960, publication of General Maxwell Taylor's book entitled The Uncertain Trumpet. General Taylor, prior to his retirement as Army Chief of Staff in June, 1959, had been one of the most eloquent and persistent "in-House" critics of the Administration's strategic military policies, and in The Uncertain Trumpet he set forth what he considered to be the most significant obstacles to the development of such policies and detailed the existing major deficiencies in America's military posture. He further outlined a course of action for immediate correction of the most serious deficiencies, and a long-range program for the ultimate improvement of strategic military policy and supporting programs.

In delineating major administrative obstacles to the development of defense policy, he said, ". . . in spite of the seeming logical procedures for developing national strategy in the National Security Council and military strategy in the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the system has failed for several fundamental reasons. The National Security Council has not come to grips with the fundamental defense problems and has failed to produce clear-cut guidance for the armed forces. The Joint



Chiefs of Staff have failed to agree on the forces needed to support the agreed strategic concept, and hence have not produced the military guidance needed by the military services. The Secretary of Defense has interjected fiscal considerations into mid-range planning and has thus deprived it of much of its potential value."<sup>81</sup>

In his consideration of the Administration's budgetary policy and/or process, General Taylor emphasized two particular areas of concern. The first, and one that had been considered at length by the Congress, was the establishment of budgetary limitations on the armed services without reference to military requirements. In this regard he said, ". . . the Secretary of Defense, through the use of budgetary guidelines, has become the true artisan of our military strategy without necessarily foreseeing the end product. This setting of guidelines has not been an arbitrary action on his part, but one to which he has been impelled in carrying out the policies of the Executive branch of the government, especially the directives of the Bureau of the Budget."<sup>82</sup> The other

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<sup>81</sup>M. D. Taylor, The Uncertain Trumpet, p. 87.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., p. 122.



area of budgetary concern, and one that Congress had not considered exhaustively, was vertical budgeting by individual military service as opposed to horizontal budgeting by strategic or tactical function. This particular aspect of budgeting would, however, come under close Congressional scrutiny later in the year.

General Taylor's observations on the inadequacies of America's military posture included in part: the missile gap, vulnerability of SAC, and limited war capabilities. His recommendations for immediate corrective action or "quick fixes" to offset these critical disabilities were: (1) improve planning and training for limited war; (2) exploit the mobile intermediate range ballistic missile; (3) provide better protection for SAC; (4) implement a limited fall-out shelter program.<sup>83</sup>

The long-range program for ultimate strategic military policy improvement, set forth by General Taylor, required that the United States first renounce reliance upon the strategy of massive retaliation and then prepare itself to respond anywhere, at any time, with weapons

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<sup>83</sup>Ibid., p. 139.



appropriate to the situation. To this end he proposed that first priority be given, "to modernize and protect the atomic deterrent force and to build up our limited-war counterattrition forces [and thereafter] make carefully selected provisions for continental air defense . . . ."84

This long-range military program, which drew heavily on earlier views of General Ridgway, was substantially the detailed basis of the Kennedy Administration's strategy of "Flexible Response" or "Multiple Options." A number of Taylor's "quick fixes" would also be implemented immediately upon the Kennedy Administration coming to power. It is interesting to note that, with the possible exception of his remarks concerning the role of the National Security Council, the majority of General Taylor's observations on defense budgeting, deficiencies in strategic and tactical military capabilities, and required corrective action, generally coincided with views that had been expressed by the Congress over the past several years. Uncertain Trumpet had pulled these views together into an integrated and unambiguous strategic position which the Congress had never

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<sup>84</sup>Ibid., pp. 146-147.





before possessed.

The message of Uncertain Trumpet and the timeliness of its publication had considerable impact on the public and the Congress, noticeably more than did General Matthew Ridgway's Soldier in 1956. For the Administration it constituted a serious setback to the stringent election year effort being made to dampen agitation over defense matters. For the Democratic opposition it was a windfall in the effort to publicly discredit the Executive, while at the same time providing a comprehensive strategic "position" behind which to rally.

The views expressed in Uncertain Trumpet were brought heavily to play during joint hearings before the Senate Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee and the Senate Aeronautical and Space Science Committee in February and March of 1960. These hearings, entitled Missiles, Space, and Other Major Defense Matters, would also be the last opportunity for Senator Lyndon Johnson's powerful and hostile Subcommittee to take the Administration to task before the November elections.

General Taylor was immediately called before the Committees, and, in the course of his testimony, he



reiterated, for the record, every major point made in Uncertain Trumpet.

In addition to giving full vent to General Taylor's views, the hearings also emphasized three other significant strategic military problem areas. These were: (1) the ICBM program was not being accelerated rapidly enough; (2) the Strategic Air Command was not maintaining a continuous airborne alert; (3) the funds for the Polaris program and for modernization of the Navy were totally inadequate.

Testimony concerning the Nation's ICBM program revealed that, while substantial progress had been made in this area, what with the United States' now having an operational ICBM, nevertheless the program was not moving as rapidly as it should. In this regard, Lieutenant-General B. Schriever, Commander of the Air Force Research and Development Command, said, "I would say that they [ICBM programs] were not stepped up to the degree that I felt [they] should have been."<sup>85</sup> The Administration's

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<sup>85</sup>U.S. Congress, Senate, Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Aeronautics and Space Sciences, Joint Hearings, Missiles, Space, and Other Major Defense Matters, 86th Congress, 2nd Session, 1960, p. 199.



position that adequate progress was now made in this field was further weakened by a contradiction in testimony between Defense Secretary Gates and CIA Director Allen Dulles. Secretary Gates, in his testimony, indicated that the "missile gap" had been narrowed, while Mr. Dulles, in his, indicated that the reverse was true.<sup>86</sup> Secretary Gates, who had just recently been appointed to his position, was unable to resolve this difference of "expert opinion," and so it remained throughout the remainder of the hearing.

The case for a continuous SAC airborne alert was also well made in the course of the hearings. General Thomas Power, Commander of the Strategic Air Command, in support of this requirement, said, "I think, due to the warning situation and due to the fact that the Russians are introducing missiles into their inventory, that we should maintain the highest possible percentage of our heavy force on continuous airborne alert."<sup>87</sup> General Power further went on to say that the 1961 budget did not provide adequate funding for such an alert. The

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<sup>86</sup>Ibid., p. 475.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., p. 16.



unwillingness of the Administration to provide for what appeared to be an essential strategic requirement, particularly in view of the suspected missile gap, was exploited at every opportunity by the Democratic Committee members.

It was the Navy, however, that delivered the most telling "broadside" against the Administration during the preparedness proceedings. Admiral A. Burke, Chief of Naval Operations, testified that the funds to be provided for the Polaris program in 1961 were grossly inadequate, and that additional funds appropriated by the Congress in the previous year had not been authorized for expenditure by the Executive. These allegations were serious, but they had been made before. What was new and stunning was the report of the Navy Board on Fleet Modernization, which counsel for the Subcommittee had inserted en bloc into the record. The report said, in part, "Our observation and an evaluation of the information before us led to one inescapable conclusion. The U.S. Fleet is not in an acceptable state of readiness . . . the group believes that the primary cause of this situation is an ever-widening gap between the responsibilities assigned to the Navy and the financial resources allocated





to it for carrying out those responsibilities."<sup>88</sup>

The Administration's strategic military policies and programs had not fared well in these hearings, and the Congressional dissatisfaction generated here would carry over and significantly affect the ultimate defense appropriation legislation passed later in the year.

Congressional consideration of matters affecting strategic military policy also took place in February, 1960, in hearings entitled, Organizing for National Security, before the Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery of the Committee on Government Operations. While hearings concerning "organization" would not by definition provide a forum for consideration of strategic military policy and related programs, nevertheless parts of these proceedings became such a forum. That this occurred could be attributed in no small part to the fact that Senator Henry M. Jackson, long-time opponent of the Administration's military policies, was Chairman of the Subcommittee.

Testimony which bore most directly on strategic military matters in the course of these hearings was that

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<sup>88</sup>Ibid., p. 285.



of retired General Maxwell Taylor. Encouraged by Senator Jackson, General Taylor launched into his now well-known views on the many factors underlying existing deficiencies in America's military posture. In this instance, however, those factors relating to the budgetary process were brought into clearer focus than ever had been the case before. Budgetary limitations established without reference to military requirements; military requirements generated without reference to the budgetary process; and problems resulting from vertical budgeting by service as opposed to horizontal budgeting by function, were all considered at length,<sup>89</sup> and in aggregate generally acknowledged to have been the most significant hindrances to the development of realistic strategic military policies and supporting programs.

These hearings continued well into the following year, and therefore produced no climactic "summing up" of issues that characterized many other hearings considering similar matters during the election year.

In matters of defense appropriation legislation,

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<sup>89</sup>U.S. Congress, Senate, Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery of the Committee on Government Operations, Hearings, Organizing for National Security, 1960-1961, p. 779.



however, it was readily apparent that the Eighty-sixth Congress was committed to far more than "summing up" issues. The long building consensus within the Congress now appeared prepared to effect relatively significant changes in strategic military programs, despite Executive opposition.

The Senate Appropriations Committee initially enlarged the President's defense recommendations by over \$1 billion, and amendments by Senators Paul Douglas and Henry M. Jackson, which were accepted during the course of debate, providing for a 200,000 man Marine Corps and more funds for Army modernization, added another \$140 million to the Senate bill. In conference, the two houses agreed to a final defense appropriation of just under \$40 billion, \$661.6 million over the Administration's early budget estimates, and \$780.7 million over the President's revised request of April, 1960.<sup>90</sup> The specific programs designated by Congress to receive the most substantial portion of the additional funding were: troop airlift, Minuteman and Atlas ICBM's, anti-submarine Warfare, Army equipment modernization, and Polaris.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup>Kolodziej, op. cit., p. 314.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., pp. 264-265.



Yet, in spite of its sizeable increases in military appropriations, and its multiple manipulations of the defense budget, the Congress, even in 1960, never fully succeeded in departing significantly from the "New Look." In its essential conceptual features, the "New Look" remained intact until the advent of the Kennedy Administration. At the same time, it is abundantly clear that the changes wrought by the Kennedy Administration, in the implementation of Flexible Response, grew essentially, almost exclusively, out of the Congressional ferment of the latter 1950's. The point here is that the Congress did not influence military policy or prepare the way for Flexible Response only by appropriating more money than the President requested. Congressional influence was also exercised through the efforts of an increasing number of legislators striving to understand and willing to deal with the economic and fiscal policies underlying the Nation's military programs. This coming to grips with "fiscal policy" enabled the Congress to successfully press the Eisenhower Administration for more closely reasoned and comprehensive justifications of its defense proposals.





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